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ACCESSORY POCKET ATTACHMENT FOR GARMENTS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

5 The present invention concerns apparel. More particularly, the invention is directed to an attachment pocket which can be attached to various types of outerwear garments.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART

10 After market pockets adapted for attachment to previously purchased garments are well known in the art. These pockets, commonly called "utility" or "accessory" pockets are generally used to contain items which need to be readily accessed or which might not fit into the existing pockets for the "target" garment. The majority of these pockets are of the removably attached type, which are held onto the garment using attachment means which allow for selective removal and replacement, e.g., Velcro® a hook and loop type fastener.
15 The removably attached type of pocket suffers from several drawbacks. First, they have the appearance of an aftermarket attachment, and therefore tend to "cheapen" the appearance of the target garment. Secondly, regardless of the type of attachment used, they can become skewed, twisted, or bunched over time, further degrading the visual appeal of the garment. Finally, they are subject to unintended removal, possibility resulting in the loss of the items

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contained therein.

The other type of utility or accessory pocket is the permanently attached type. These are usually stitched in, and are intended for a very specific purpose such as holding ink pens or a calculator.

5 United States Patent number 3,438,062 issued to Dobell is typical of the removable type of pocket. A ~~Velcro®~~ hook and loop border secured to the interior facing side of the pocket is sized for attachment to a mating ~~Velcro®~~ hook and loop strip on the garment. The pocket allows for changing the breast patch or logo on a blazer. By contrast, the present invention is directed to a heavy duty utility pocket which is attachable to outerwear such as
10 a coat or fleece garment.

 United States Patent number 6,311,336 issued to Gootrad discloses a combination attachment for a garment wherein at least one interior waterproof compartment is provided. Gootrad is attached using an adhesive which, apparently, forms a waterproof seal. The present invention contemplates a waterproof utility pocket which includes a waterproof
15 enclosure which is also transparent, allowing the user to selectively display an item, e.g., an identification card, without removing the displayed item from the enclosure.

The present invention is directed to a utility pocket having a waterproof enclosure with an opening covered by a transparent material. The pocket includes a flap which can be

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selectively opened to reveal an item contained within the waterproof enclosure. The flap is constructed so as to provide a watertight seal for the enclosure. The enclosure allows for storage of other small items such as keys. A method of attaching the pocket in combination with the associated components allow for reduced thickness to create a streamlined,
5 integrated look with outerwear to which it is attached.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is a major object of the invention to provide an accessory pocket for attachment to outerwear which allows for the selective display of items contained therein.

10 It is another object of the invention to provide an accessory pocket for attachment to outerwear constructed to have a streamlined appearance.

It is another object of the invention to provide an accessory pocket for attachment to outerwear having a waterproof enclosure.

15 It is yet another object of the invention to provide an accessory pocket for attachment to outerwear wherein the waterproof enclosure includes a window through which an identification card is visible.

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Finally, it is a general goal of the invention to provide improved elements and arrangements thereof in an apparatus for the purposes described which is dependable and fully effective in accomplishing its intended purposes.

5 These and other objects of the present invention will become readily apparent upon further review of the following specification and drawings.

The present invention meets or exceeds all the above objects and goals. Upon further study of the specification and appended claims, further objects and advantages of this invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

10 Various other objects, features, and attendant advantages of the present invention will become more fully appreciated as the same becomes better understood when considered with the accompanying drawings, in which like reference characters designate the same or similar parts throughout the several views, and wherein:

15 Fig. 1 shows a perspective view of an outerwear garment illustrating the placement of an accessory pocket thereon.

Fig. 2 shows an isolated perspective view of the accessory pocket of the invention.

Fig. 3 shows a plan view of the accessory pocket with the protective flap open.

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Fig. 4 shows a plan view of the accessory pocket with the protective flap closed.

Fig. 5 shows a side sectional view of the accessory pocket attached to a garment.

Fig. 6 shows a plan view of the accessory pocket enclosure illustrating the relation of the water tight sealing means to the inner enclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Referring now to Figs. 1 - 6, the accessory pocket attachment of the present invention, generally indicated by the numeral 10, is shown. It can be seen that the pocket 10 is designed for attachment to a garment 12, which is preferably an outer garment such as a ski parka. One of the primary objectives of the invention is to provide a means to allow a user to selectively display an identification card, ski pass, or other document in an outdoor environment without the inconvenience of having to go through a pocket to pull out and open a wallet. To that end, the pocket 10 includes an enclosure 13 having a transparent window 14 behind which an identification card can be disposed. The enclosure 13 is sized to contain other items as well. A protective covering or flap 15 is attached to the garment 12 in such a way as to provide waterproofing for the enclosure 13, the flap 15 being movable between open and closed positions to allow for selectively displaying the identification card as will be explained in more detail later.

The pocket 10 comprises three main components which are attached to each other and the garment 12 so as to substantially reduce the profile of the pocket 10 relative to the outer surface of the garment 12, effectively streamlining the pocket 10 to maintain the original aesthetics of the garment 12. The three components each are attached directly to the garment, with each having relatively thick border portions to enhance the durability of the attachment. Each of the border portions are laterally spaced by a predetermined position to

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avoid bunching and to enhance the overall appearance of the pocket 10.

The first component of the pocket 10 is a hook and loop type fastener component (i.e., ~~Velcro®~~ a hook and loop fastener) fashioned as a strip 18 which cooperates with the flap 15 to create a water tight boundary for the enclosure 13, the flap and the enclosure 13 forming the second and third components, respectively, of the pocket 10. The ~~Velcro®~~ hook and loop strip 18 is continuous about three sides of the enclosure 13 with the exception of a notch or spacing 20 which allows for placement of pull tab 22 on flap 15 therein, the pull tab 22 serving to allow for disengaging of the flap 15 from the ~~Velcro®~~ hook and loop strip 18. In order to reduce the thickness of the accessory pocket attachment 10, the ~~Velcro®~~ hook and loop strip 18 is double stitched directly onto the garment 12 with stitching 23, the ~~Velcro®~~ hook and loop strip in spaced relation about the periphery 26 of enclosure 13, as opposed to being stitched directly onto edge portions of the enclosure 13. Preferably, the ~~Velcro®~~ hook and loop strip 18, is attached to the garment first to ensure proper spacing between the enclosure 13 and the ~~Velcro®~~ hook and loop strip 18, and to allow for visualizing the aesthetic impact of a selected pocket location. Specifically, once ~~Velcro®~~ hook and loop strip 18 is attached to the garment 10, the enclosure 13, which is also double stitched directly onto the garment 12 via stitching 25, may be centered to enhance the uniformity of the pocket 10. Preferably the spacing between the edge of enclosure 13 and the inner edge of the ~~Velcro~~ hook and loop strip 18 is at least half the distance of the width of the ~~Velcro®~~ hook and loop strip.

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The enclosure 13 is formed of a border portion 30 of preferably heavy cloth material, the border portion 30 formed by folding the material back onto itself and retaining it in the folded position as by stitching 25, adhesives, or both. Transparent or translucent material is stitched about the inner edge portions of the border 30 via stitching 31 to form a window 14.

5 It can be appreciated that the top edge 33 of enclosure 13 is not stitched so that an opening 35 for inserting and removing articles is provided. In order to enhance the water tight seal, a heat activated adhesive is used to retain the border portion 30 in the folded position after as can be seen most clearly in Fig. 5. Thus, the window 14 would be secured inside border portion 30 by both stitching and an adhesive. Additional waterproofing may be attained by
10 providing a "zip lock" type seal (not shown), commonly used for plastic food storage bags, for the top edge 33 of the window. This would require using a cooperating strip having a groove formed therein for receiving a linear protrusion formed proximate top edge 33 of window 14. In this instance, a pull tab (not shown) may be provided to facilitate opening of the enclosure 13. The enclosure 13 is then completed by attaching the border portion 30
15 with window 14 secured therein directly to the garment 12.

After the enclosure 13 has been formed and attached, flap 15 is attached directly to the garment 12 by stitching. The flap 15 is prepared for attachment to the garment 12 by first attaching Velcro® hook and loop strips 34 at the border area of the interior facing surface 36 of the flap 15. It can be appreciated that the interior facing surface 36 is not visible when
20 the flap 15 is folded to cover enclosure 13. Spaces 38 are left along the Velcro® hook and

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5 loop stripping 34 to reduce the amount of force required to “open” the flap. Tab 22 is sewn at the top edge of the flap 15, the tab 22 allowing the user to pull down the flap 15 to expose the contents of the enclosure 13. An additional enclosure in the form of an inner pocket formed in the inner facing surface 36 of the flap 15 may also be provided. A logo, monogram, or other identifying indicia may be affixed to the exterior facing side 42 of the flap 15, the logo optionally matching the logo associated with the target garment 12 to allow an authorized manufacturer to give the appearance that the accessory pocket 10 was part of garment 12 as originally sold. In accordance with one aspect of the invention, the accessory pocket 10 is sold to manufacturers of various well known outer garments for sale either as an accessory or pre attached to the respective garments. The ~~Velcro®~~ hook and loop strips 18, 34, in combination with the sealing adhesives used for the enclosure 13 cooperate to provide a substantially watertight enclosure 13 once flap 15 is folded up causing the engagement of strips 18 and 34. Also, attaching all three components of the pocket 10, the enclosure 13, the flap 15, and the ~~Velcro®~~ hook and loop strip 18 directly to the garment 12 in spaced relation, as opposed to each other, significantly reduces the profile of the pocket 10 to produce a more streamlined, integrated look.

15 In use, once the pocket 10 has been attached as indicated, the wearer of the garment 12 may selectively open flap 15 by pulling tab 22 to reveal the contents of the enclosure 13. The enclosure 13 is preferably sized to accommodate an identification card such as a ski pass, as well as some other relatively small items such as a spare key or credit card. If used

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5 to contain a ski pass for example, the user may quickly display the pass without having to fumble through pockets or remove heavy ski gloves. Alternatively, the enclosure 13 may be sized to accommodate larger items by using more material or by other means as may be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art. If sold to a "name brand" manufacturer such as Nautica®, the pocket 10 may be provided with a logo or trademark of the manufacturer to allow for seamless integration of the garment and providing an additional display location for the manufacturer's trademark or logo.

10 From the foregoing description, one skilled in the art can easily ascertain the essential characteristics of this invention and, without departing from the spirit and scope thereof, can make various changes and modifications of the invention to adapt it to various usages and conditions.

It is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the sole embodiment described above, but encompasses any and all embodiments within the scope of the following claims: